

NEWS Release

For Immediate Release

Topic: Craig Named EMS Director
Contact: NKS Wessman or Kelly Shannon
Date: April 2, 2001

State Health Officer Dr. Ed Thompson announced the appointment of James (Jim) H. Craig, III, as new director of Emergency Medical Services for the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Former EMS Director Wade N. Spruill, Jr., retired in October with some 35 years of state service.

Craig, who joined the Department in 1993 as an advanced life support and air ambulance inspector, also serves as chief of Heuck's Retreat Fire Department, Brookhaven, and chairs the Mississippi Fire Personnel Minimum Standards and Certification Board, Department of Insurance.

A nationally registered EMT and CLEAR certified investigator/inspector, he is a graduate of University of Southwest Louisiana and also holds an AAS degree in forensic sciences from Louisiana State University. He formerly worked with Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

Craig is a member of the Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training Board, of the National Association of State EMS Directors, and of the Mississippi Fire Fighters and Fire Chiefs Associations. He is a representative to the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians and past president of the Lincoln County Fire Fighters Association.

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The EMS division organizes, regulates, and maintains a statewide program to improve emergency medical care; tests and certifies EMTs on the basic, intermediate, and paramedic levels; and administers federal and state funding for local level EMS.

In FY 2000, Mississippi claimed 131 licensed EMS providers — 123 ground and eight air services — which operate 550 state-permitted vehicles. The state boasted 1,045 EMT-Paramedics, the most intensively trained and tested EMTs; 278 EMT-Intermediates, who have studied to increase their skills beyond the level necessary for basic life support; 1,040 EMTs, who take 110 clock hours training in patient assessment, first aid, and communication and transport skills; and 3,409 certified EMS drivers.



Jim Craig

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